Increasing the generation of electricity

128. SHRI M. BASAVARAJU : Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal to increase the generation of electricity ; if so, what are the details in this regard ;

(b) whether Government propose to help the States specially Karnataka to overcome the problem of power cuts and hike in tariffs, if so, in what manner ; and

(c) how Government propose to strengthen in State Electricity Boards in the matter of generation of electricity and reduction of power thefts ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF POWER (SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN) : (a) Power generation in the country is proposed to be increased by installing new generating capacity, expediting commissioning of ongoing projects and improving the performance of existing thermal power stations.

Installation of new generating capacity of about 22,245 MW is envisaged during the Seventh Plan. Ongoing projects are being closely monitored for expediting their commissioning. For improving the performance of existing thermal power stations, various measures have been taken which include renovation of existing thermal power stations under a Centrally sponsored scheme, training of operation and maintenance personnel, introduction of modern methods and techniques in the areas of operation and maintenance etc.

(b) Power deficit States are generally provided assistance from the power surplus States depending upon availability and transmission facilities. Karnataka State is getting assistance from neighbouring States of Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh depending upon surplus availability. Power tariff in the State is decided by the State Electricity Board/State Government.

(c) In order to support and supplement the efforts being made by the State Electricity Boards, Central Electricity Authority/Department of Power are also monitoring the construction of on-going projects. Senior officers visit the projects and render assistance and advice in removing the bottlenecks. Review meetings are also conducted by CEA with the main equipment supplier for timely delivery of the equipments.

For improving the power generation from the existing thermal power stations, Roving Teams and Task Forces of Central Electricity Authority visit various power stations along with BHEL/Instrumentation Limited, Kota and power station engineers to identify the areas affecting power generation. Time bound action plans are drawn up to remove the constraints.

States have been advised to take measures to minimise power thefts. The measures suggested include (i) setting up of vigilance squads to conduct surprise inspections ; (ii) comparing monthly meter readings of industrial consumers with those of other similar consumers with a view to detecting significant variations in consumption ; (iii) provisions of cut-outs after the metering to prevent direct tapping of power ; and (iv) use of zig-zag and numbered seals on the meter terminal cover and cut out and to keep the account of seals to detect fake seals etc.

Oil and gas exploration

129. SHRI RAMANAND YADAV : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government has decided to offer fresh off-shore areas